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A Study of Students' Self-Concept in Relationship to Their Teachers' Self-Concept, Ethnicity and Gender in Selected Middle-Level Grades in a Large Metropolitan Public School System

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

A STUDY OF STUDENTS' SELF-CONCEPT IN RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR
TEACHERS' SELF-CONCEPT, ETHNICITY AND GENDER IN SELECTED
MIDDLE-LEVEL GRADES IN A LARGE METROPOLITAN
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BY

MARIA LUISA CONFORTI-PRATO

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY, 1995

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DEDICATION

To my husband and partner for over half my life who promised to support me in all my endeavors and who has never wavered on that promise, for that I am forever grateful.

My superb parents, Italian immigrants who brought me as a young child to a new country and not only told me but modeled that there is nothing that cannot be conquered through perseverance and genuine hard work, the ultimate models of positive self-concept, to them I say "grazie per tutto che me hai insegnato."

To my three teen-aged daughters, I pray that it will be possible for you to achieve over and above what your mother has achieved in whichever field you choose.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Bandura (1969), cited in Wylie (1979), stated:

...although wide differences of opinion exist among personality theorists in what they consider to be the most suitable reference events for identification, it is generally agreed that identification refers to a process in which a person patterns his thoughts, feelings, or actions after another person who serves as a model. (p.334)

It has been generally agreed upon by researchers that students who have positive self-concepts perform academically well in school. The results of these self-concept studies are also used to examine how students obtain positive self-concepts, and the influences that enhance those self-concepts. Researchers have also indicated that teachers model various traits for their students, one of them being positive self-concepts. This study will compare the extent to which a student's self-concept is influenced by his or her teachers' self-concept.

Justification of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is

a positive relationship between students' self-concept and the self-concept of their teachers. It has been asserted in the literature that if a teacher has a positive self-concept and models those characteristics for the students that are under her/his care, that the students will be affected positively and will also have a positive self-concept.

Regardless of whether self-concept is included in the growing list of outcomes for which schools are held accountable, research has shown that the school experience is an important factor in the development of a student's self-concept. Self-concept is largely influenced by the way students are treated and perceive themselves as being treated. Furthermore, researchers have found that students with positive self-concepts perform better academically than those who have poor self-concepts. Teachers are the students' daily contact persons in school and influence to a great degree how students perceive the school experience. Thus, it is imperative that this researcher include the teacher's self-concept as a factor in the study of student self-concept.

Beane (1983) states: Self-concept and esteem are central features in human personality. This is particularly true of middle level schools. Transescents are not only involved in the search for self, but must do so in the context of enormous personal changes and increasingly complex social pressures. Furthermore, for many

transescents, the school is the last resort for help in dealing with personal and social issues (p.70).

Like most other states in America, Illinois has responded to the report A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) by initiating more stringent standards to govern the educational process. Illinois has mandated Illinois Goals Assessment Programs (IGAP) testing throughout each district within the state in order to monitor and compare student progress on a state-wide basis. Although the IGAP does not test student self-concept at this time, it does monitor student academic achievement.

Specifically for Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the legislature has mandated that Local School Councils (LSC) be elected to bring greater power to the parents and community of each local school, creating a form of site-based management. The LSC has policy-making power for their local school which gives them authority to examine critical areas such as student academic achievement and school climate. Many LSC's in Chicago have initiated programs to enhance both student as well as teacher self-concept.

Also, as in other states across the nation, Illinois school systems have asked the courts to rule on the inequity of school funds among state school districts. McInnis V. Shapiro was brought to the courts on behalf of elementary and secondary public school students in four Cook County,

Illinois, school districts. The suit claimed that the Illinois system of public finance violated the equal protection guarantees of the 14th Amendment, since there were markedly inequitable per-pupil expenditures among Illinois school districts. The court ruled that the 14th Amendment did not require public schools expenditures to be made solely on educational need. Furthermore, education expenses were not the exclusive yardstick for measuring the quality of a student's educational opportunity. Lastly, the court ruled that there were no judicially manageable standards by which to determine when the equal protection clause is satisfied or violated.

These points are raised since the study is conducted in a large urban school system that, by comparison to many suburban districts, has less financial stability. In comparison to suburban districts, this urban school system educates a greater percentage of minority students. The income level of the students is, in comparison, a great deal lower than suburban school's students.

Hypotheses

Based on previous research and the inferences they suggest, the following hypotheses were developed and are stated here in the null form:

- 1) There is no significant difference between the self-

concept of students and the self-concept of their teachers.

2) There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and gender of students.

3) There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and the ethnicity of the students.

4) There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and the grade level of the students.

Target Population

The middle-level student was chosen as the sample age group since, according to statistics compiled in 1987 by the National Center for Self-Esteem, as students get older, their self-esteem often diminishes. They supply the following quantitative data:

- * 80 percent of kindergarten students have high self-esteem
- * By the time students reach grade five, the number has dropped to twenty percent.
- * By the time students graduate from high school, the number of students having a positive self-image drops to five percent.
- * Fewer than two percent of college seniors exhibit high self-esteem.

In addition, grades five, six and seven participated in the study since the administrators of the schools wanted to

follow the students for a period of time once this study was completed. The eighth grade students would have graduated and not been able to have follow-up evaluations, thus, they were excluded from the study. Grade seven will be monitored for one year while the other two grades will be monitored until they graduate. Students identified by Public Law 94-142 as handicapped, and who receive their classroom instruction according to an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.), were exempt from the sample. This was done since their responses would not have been considered valid by the measurement instrument.

Instrumentation

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) was used to measure student self-concept. This instrument was chosen over others since it possessed high validity and reliability and was reported to be the most psychometrically sound instrument for assessing children's self-esteem. The PHCSCS measures an individual child's self-evaluative attitudes and behaviors which have a bearing on self-concept. The measure consists of an 80-item self-report questionnaire that was divided into six subscales: behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity and happiness and satisfaction. Subscales were scored in the direction of

positive self-concept so that a high score on a particular subscale indicates a high level of assessed self-concept within the specific dimension. A total score was computed by summing the totals from each of the six subscales.

The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was administered to a selected portion of the schools' faculty. The selected faculty members were informed of the purpose of the survey and the importance of the assessment. They were assured that the responses would be kept confidential. All selected faculty members with students in the middle grade level that had been given the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale participated in the study by answering the questions in the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. Those 34 teachers do in fact comprise the faculty sample. The information obtained from the faculty gave this researcher added information about the teachers' self-concept.

The survey instruments were administered by this researcher in each of the schools that participated in the study. The students were assured that the surveys were not a test, but rather instruments to provide school personnel with information that could help create a better environment for them. Students were encouraged to answer honestly. Every attempt was made to put the students at ease. Students were informed that responses will remain anonymous and that teachers would not have access to the completed forms. The teachers were also assured that the surveys were

not a test, but rather instruments to provide school personnel with information that could help create a better environment for them. Teachers were encouraged to answer honestly. Every attempt was made to put the teachers at ease. Teachers were informed that responses would remain anonymous and the administrators would not have access to completed forms. Following the collection of the completed questionnaires, results were computed in accordance with manual directions.

Response frequencies were computed for respondents' demographic characteristics including grade level, gender, ethnicity. Thirty-four t-tests were performed by employing the percentile rank for both the students' and teachers' self-concept scores rather than their means (Null Hypothesis 1). A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-concept of males and females (Null Hypothesis 2). A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-concept of students by ethnicity (Null Hypothesis 3). A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-concept of students by grade-level (Null Hypothesis 4).

Significance of the Study

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and the

Tennessee Self-Concept Scale identified self-concept of the respondents as perceived by the students and faculty who participated in the study. The PHSCS identified the child's level of self-concept. The TSCS identified the teachers' level of self-concept. Data obtained from the two surveys provided information to assist educators to develop goals and a plan of action for improving student and staff self-concept. More specifically, an analysis of the subscales scores provided information that can help administrators decide whether to add, eliminate, continue, or adjust new or existing school programs. This study provided useful information to educators that could enhance understanding of how teachers influence their students, academically as well as in terms of self-concept.

Definition of Terms

General

Ethnicity An ethnic classification or affiliation, having a common cultural heritage, as distinguished by customs, characteristics, language or common history.

L.S.C. Local School councils were mandated by the Illinois legislature in 1989 for the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) school district 299. Each L.S.C. is designed to consist of 2 community members, 2 teachers from the local school and 6 parents who have students currently attending that school, and the principal of the school. The L.S.C. was intended as a

form of site-based management which has policy-making power for their local school as well as the power to hire and fire the local principal.

Student Self-Concept The perceptions students have about their competencies. This construct was measured by the Piers-Harris Children's self-concept scale.

Teacher Self-Concept The perceptions teachers have about their competencies. This construct was measured by the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale.

Statistical

Analysis of Variance is a method of statistical inference utilized to determine whether the differences among two or more means are greater than would be expected from sampling error alone.

Oneway ANOVA Utilized to determine whether the differences among two or more means are greater than would be expected from sampling error alone.

Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) A computer program for statistical analysis.

t-Test A procedure used to examine the null hypothesis that the means of two populations are equal to each other. Done by hand utilizing a calculator. Corresponding percentage for the teachers' raw self-concept score with the percentage corresponding to the students' mean self-concept score over

the total classroom mean.

Tukey The Tukey, a method of multiple comparisons, is Post-hoc test utilized to find where the significance within the analysis of variance can be found, i.e., by testing the largest pairwise difference in the set of means.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made relative to the study:

- 1) It was assumed that school personnel cooperated with the researcher to establish a positive survey atmosphere during the administration of the survey instruments.
- 2) It was assumed that respondents gave accurate perceptions when completing the survey instruments.
- 3) It was presumed that research findings relative to the relationship between teachers' and students' perceptions of self-concept were directly related to the reliability of the instruments used.

Limitations

This study was limited to selected fifth, sixth, and seventh-grade students, and their teachers, in a large urban public school system in Illinois. As the PHCSCS and the

TSCS were self-reported instruments, it was assumed that the reports were valid.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter one is an introduction in which the purpose is examined. The hypotheses are posed and the population and instrumentations are discussed. In addition the significance of the study is examined. Definition of terms are given to allow the reader to understand more clearly the terminology used. Assumptions and limitations are both stated. Chapter two includes a review of the literature, the main focus of concentration being on self-concept, examined in conjunction with students' academic achievement, school climate, teachers, middle level grades, gender, teachers' influence and ethnicity. Chapter three examines the methods utilized for the study. The subjects, instrumentation, collection and data analysis are all explained. Chapter four examines the results where the respondents' demographic characterizations are presented. Hypotheses are reviewed and the findings are given. Chapter five presents a discussion of the findings for all four hypotheses. Chapter six reports the conclusions and the recommendations for future research. A list of references is given and appendices are included to give a visual explanation of the findings of the study.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Related Literature

Introduction

Chapter One suggested that a need existed to explore teachers' self-concept influence on students' self-concept. Chapter Two presents a review of the current literature relevant to the study of how teachers influence their students to have a positive self-concept.

Educators realize that their students are coming to school with a variety of needs. Those needs, at times, are overwhelming for a student. Thus, in order to educate the student effectively, the educator must help the child develop a positive attitude towards learning and towards himself. Researchers stress that this important component to success can no longer be overlooked.

Self-Concept/Self-Esteem are terms used to denote a person's self-perception. Although self-esteem is generally used as a more specific term for the evaluative process of the individual's report of self, Well and Marwell (1976) reported that in the literature on self-concept, "...self-concept is sometimes virtually equated with self-esteem" (p.59). They further note that many writers feel the

"...explicit definitional efforts are, in many cases, superfluous" (p. 60). For the purposes of this study, the terms self-concept and self-esteem are used interchangeably. In citing research, the term used by that writer was used. In reporting the findings of this study, self-concept was identified by the student's score on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and the teacher's score on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale.

Self-Concept

"In general, only a child who feels safe dares to grow forward healthily. His safety needs must be gratified." Combs (1962) defined self-concept as "the ways in which an individual characteristically sees himself" (p. 51). He elaborated on this statement by saying:

People learn who they are and what they are from ways in which they have been treated by those who surround them in the process of their growing up....People develop feelings that they are liked, wanted, acceptable, and able from having been liked, wanted, accepted, and from having been successful....It is a common fallacy among many lay people and some teachers that since the world is a very hard place and people sometimes fail, children should be introduced to failure early (Combs, 1962, p. 53).

Self-concept is the perception and awareness of oneself and is usually described as being positive or negative. Self-concept is learned through day-to-day experiences and comments made by significant others. Beane et al. (1980)

stated that parents serve as significant others in childhood, but during adolescence, a child views peers as the most significant others. As people get older, roles become more defined and an awareness of the environment becomes more acute. Therefore, the school's environment can affect a student's self-concept. Marsh (1992) utilized 14 academic self-concept scales in his study on 507 boys. He found that self-concept and achievement were much larger than those typically found in previous research.

A substantial body of research has shown that students' self-concept of academic ability is related to achievement, and confidence and belief in one's ability to perform appear to be necessary ingredients to achieving academic success (Brookover, Beamer, Efthim, Hathaway, Lezotte, Miller, Passalacqua, & Tornetzky, 1982). Brookover and colleagues contend that a "student's confidence in his or her ability to succeed in school is related to past experiences in school and to teachers' expectations for achievement" (p.60).

Purkey (1970) explored the relationship between students' positive self-concepts and school achievement. His research led him to support the thesis that students' assessments of themselves and their personal abilities have a direct affect on how successful they are in school.

Student Self-Concept and Gender

Kelly, Jordan & LaVerne (1990) found that eighth grade students at varying achievement levels had a higher self-concept on academic measures if their achievement was high. Skaalvik & Rankin (1990) examined 231 sixth-grade Norwegian students and found that girls had a substantially higher level of achievement and higher success expectations than their male classmates in verbal tasks, whereas there were no gender differences in achievement or success expectations in mathematics or in general academic self-esteem. In the same study of Norwegian sixth graders Skaalvik (1990) found that there were gender differences in academic self-concept areas.

Student Self-Concept and School Climate

"A sense of security is the first prerequisite to positive self-esteem. Children need this sense of security before they look at themselves realistically or risk the possibility of failure" Reasoner (1982).

The feeling a student has about himself/herself is reflected in his/her feelings for the school (Epstein, 1981). The school has the means to have a significant effect on the adolescent's self-concept by providing a positive school climate (Van Koughnett & Smith, 1969).

According to Fraser (1986), students are at a good vantage point to make judgments about classrooms because

they have encountered many different learning environments and have spent enough time in class to form accurate impressions. Students spend much time at school. Jackson (1968) estimated that a child spends as much as 7,000 hours in school by the completion of elementary school. Rutter et al. (1979) stated that the figure rises to some 15,000 hours by the completion of secondary school. Therefore, students are in a position to give the most accurate perceptions about school climate.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1979), the school environment is largely the sum of the classroom environments within the school. How students view the school is based on what they see happening in the classroom and how they perceive the classroom teacher and other students in the classroom. When the student-student interaction is predominantly cooperative in most of the classrooms, the total school environment reflects the positive outcomes of the classrooms.

Self-Concept of Teachers

"Everything the teacher does, as well as the manner in which he does it, incites the child to respond in some way or another and each response tends to set the child's attitude in some way or another" (Dewey, 1933). "The concepts which the teacher has of the children become the

concepts which the children come to have of themselves" (Patterson, 1973).

It is true that as the adult learns to be a role giver, the child learns to be a person. Kohlberg (1981) referred to mutual role-taking as "seeing myself as others are seeing me as we interact" (p. 326). In his stages of moral development, it is crucial to have a model of the behavior needed in the next level. Kohlberg defined the process for making moral decisions as "ideal role taking" (p. 199).

An excellent bridge between self theory and role theory was provided by Goffman (1959). His "presentation of self" described the necessary, but often contrived, roles that one plays in life. He defined the social roles as "the enactment of rights and duties attached to a given status" (p. 16). Marsh & Graven (1991) found that teachers and parents were able to infer Physical ability, Reading, Mathematics and General School self-concepts better than other areas of self-concept. In a study conducted by Craven, Marsh & Herbert (1991) they found that when specific facets of self-concept are targeted, research-administered intervention can modestly enhance the academic self-concept of students.

The works reviewed suggested a blending of self and role development. In light of previously cited relationships between self-concept and achievement, such a blend had strong implications for this study. A search for

relationships between various role models and self-concept was conducted. Brooks (1987) stated the need for appropriate role models for minority children. "Without positive role models to pattern their lives after, the children often are influenced by society's losers" (p. 240). He considered black teachers to be crucial role models for black and white students. Consequently, the current shortage of black teachers was cited as a crisis affecting excellence in education.

Referring to black teachers, Cooper (1988) maintained that "these professional adults are the 'significant others' for black children - persons who act as appropriate role models and are capable of enhancing the self-concept of the young" (p. 123). However, Henderson (1977) conducted a study to determine whether the self concepts of black and white students were affected by the race and sex of the teacher. The results did not show significant increases for black students taught by a black teacher.

Brookover, Lepere, Hamacheck, and Erickson (1965) not only acknowledged the role of significant others, but conducted an investigation that "has shown that the students' self-concept of ability can be modified by significant others and thereby affect their achievement" (p. 212).

Carew and Lightfoot (1979) identified the teacher as the central figure dominating and controlling the activities of children. After the age of five, most children spend the

majority of their active hours in school classrooms. Teachers are the adults with whom children spend as much time, or more, as with their own parent(s). Is the teacher, then, considered a role model? If so, what effect can that modeling have on children?

Cramer, Bowerman, and Campbell (1966) found that when students were asked to name the most important influence on their educational plans, teachers ranked second only to their parents. "The child's affect, negative or positive, toward the educational process focuses on teachers as its representatives" (p.173).

Comer (1988) makes a direct comparison between good parenting and good teaching and calls for surrogate parenting in the classroom. All adults involved with children either help or thwart children's growth and development- whether we like it, intend it, or not." (p.34)

In studying self-concept and the curriculum, Lipka, Bene, and Ludewig (1980) found that of all references to adult guidance, 87.7 percent were the teacher. They went on to state that "...about a fifth of a child's sense of self is derived from the school experience and that self within the institution and self as engaged learner are the most salient categories within that experience" (p.22).

Purkey (1984) stressed the importance of the role of the teacher in helping students see themselves and their abilities more positively. He further explained that

teachers can help build a positive self-concept by conveying the idea that each person has untapped capacities for learning and that the teacher's most important role was first to view students in positive ways, then invite them to behave as expected.

Matthews and Brown(1976) described students' self-concept of ability and desire to achieve as interacting influences on students' effort to achieve. They explained that if students want to achieve and believe they can achieve, they will exert the necessary effort to achieve. However, if students do not possess the desire to achieve, teachers can expect them to exert little effort. Matthews and Brown reported from their research that the desire to achieve was influenced by social experiences one has as a young child when values, attitudes, and beliefs are first developed. However, they also pointed out that teachers can have an effect on the social environment of children through the structuring of specific activities in the classroom, and therefore, influence students' self-concept of ability and their desire to achieve.

McCombs and Marzano (1990) support the earlier research of Matthews and Brown (1976) by stressing the role of the teacher in providing emotional support for students' self-concept of abilities. They also stressed the importance of designing learning experiences for students that communicate that each student and his or her needs and talents are

valued. Paris and Newman (1990) emphasize that the learning experiences and environment for low achievers need special attention from teachers. They suggest that small-group activities provide more comfortable settings for low achievers rather than the often-used whole class activities.

Purkey (1984) described the characteristics of a teacher which recognizes the unique potential of each student as follows:

1. Respects individual uniqueness and encourages students to be confident of their ability to learn.
2. Reflects a cooperative spirit where everyone takes part in making important decisions.
3. Communicates a sense of belonging to everyone by providing warmth and a sense of community.
4. Provides a pleasant environment for learning where everyone has equal responsibility for the upkeep.
5. Encourages positive self-concepts by relating the expectation that everyone has the ability to learn.

"What teachers expect, students are likely to learn" (Brookover et al., 1982, p.54). Good and Brophy (1990) defined teacher expectations as "inferences that teachers make about present and future academic achievement and general classroom behavior of students" (p.442). Teacher expectation effects are "student outcomes that occur because of the actions that teachers take in response to their own expectations" (Good & Brophy, 1987, p. 116). These

expectations are often formed and transmitted unconsciously to students. Teacher expectations of students may include beliefs about students' abilities and whether these abilities can be changed, students' potential to benefit from instruction, appropriate difficulty of material to be used, and whether the class should be taught as a group or as individuals. Expectations for students may be based on test data, grades, teacher comments, family background, observed motivation of the student, general work habits and participation in class.

Good and Brophy (1987, 1990) described two types of expectation effects: self-sustaining and self-fulfilling prophecy effects. Self-sustaining effects occur when teachers expect students to continue previously developed behavior patterns and possibly ignore changes in student potential (Good & Brophy, 1987). Cooper and Good (1983) explain that the differential treatment teachers provide for high and low achievers is an example of this type of effect. Teachers often wait longer for high achievers to respond to questions, provide them with more chances to succeed on tasks, and give them more praise and less criticism.

Self-fulfilling prophecy effects occur when teachers behave in ways that confirm their original expectations of a student. Brookover et. al. (1982) defined self-fulfilling prophecy as "a process in which an unsubstantiated judgment or evaluation (of a person or situations) is treated as

though it were absolute fact and subsequent actions are based on the distorted evaluation" (p.62).

The study most often cited as an example of self-fulfilling prophecy is "Pygmalion in the Classroom," by Rosenthal and Jacobson in 1968. Their study concluded that the achievement gains of certain students, who had been earmarked by the researchers as academic "bloomers," went up more than scores of other students in the class (Brookover et al., 1982). These students had actually been randomly selected and academic prowess had not been a factor at all.

Researchers have criticized the methodology used in the Pygmalion study; however, findings have supported the original hypothesis of the study that postulated that teacher expectations can and sometimes do have an effect on student outcomes (Brophy, 1983; Cooper & Good, 1983; Dusek, 1985; Marshall & Weinstein, 1984). In 1974, Brophy and Good developed a model which assisted in understanding how teachers' expectations can become self-fulfilling prophecies for students:

1. The teacher expects specific behavior and achievement from particular students.
2. Because of these expectations, the teacher behaves differently toward different students.
3. This treatment by the teacher tells each student what behavior and achievement the teacher expects, and it affects the student's self-concept, achievement

motivation, and level of aspiration.

4. If this teacher treatment is consistent over time, and if the student does not actively resist or change it in some way, it will shape the student's achievement and behavior. High-expectation students will be led to achieve at high levels, but the achievement of low-expectation students will decline.

5. With time, the student's achievement and behavior will conform more and more closely to that expected by the teacher (p.445).

It is important to note that teacher expectations do not automatically become self-fulfilling prophecies for students. Students can force teachers to change their expectations by consistently resisting them and behaving opposite to those expectations.

Good and Brophy have done extensive reviews of the literature over the past two decades and have identified common ways low teacher expectations can be expressed through teacher behavior. Those behaviors include:

1. Waiting less time for lows to answer questions compared to how long the teacher typically waits for other students to answer.
2. Giving lows the answer or calling on someone else (instead of trying to elicit the answer by giving clues or rephrasing the question).
3. Rewarding inappropriate behavior of lows.

4. Criticizing lows more frequently for failure.
5. Praising lows less frequently for success.
6. Not giving feedback to public responses of lows.
7. Paying less attention to lows or interacting with them less frequently.
8. Calling on lows less often.
9. Different interaction patterns with highs and lows: Highs dominate public response opportunities in elementary school and become even more dominant in secondary classrooms.
10. Demanding less from lows.
11. Other forms of differential treatment include (a) seating lows farther from the teacher; (b) interacting with lows more privately than publicly and monitoring and structuring their activities more closely; (c) differential grading of tests and assignments in which highs but not lows are given the benefit of the doubt in borderline cases; (d) fewer friendly interactions with lows, including less smiling and less informative feedback to their questions; (e) less eye contact and other nonverbal communicating of attention and responsiveness; (f) less use of effective but time-consuming methods with lows when time is limited; (g) less acceptance and use of lows' ideas. (p.446)

Good and Brophy (1990) pointed out that the preceding behaviors do not exist in every school or every classroom.

In addition, these teacher behaviors can be due to student behaviors (students not raising their hands may affect the number of times they are called on). And finally, when used appropriately some of the teacher behaviors toward low-achievers may be considered good teaching strategies. For example, low-achieving students often need more structure with closer monitoring and private interactions between the teacher and student may provide a more comfortable situation than more public interactions.

Teachers should be cautious, however, that the differentiation is not large and does not encompass many of the variables. The fear seems to be that teachers may just go through the motions of instructing low achievers and not actually have specific goals in mind as to the progress they expect these students to make. If goals are identified, another concern is that those goals are lower level, promoting lower expectations.

Weinstein (1983) determined from interviews with students that they were quite aware of the differences in teacher patterns of interaction. Students reported that high-achieving students get more choices as to learning opportunities, and teacher expectation for student outcomes are higher. Cooper and Good (1983) reported similar findings through student interviews. Students considered high achievers described their interactions with teachers as being more public than private and considered themselves as

receiving praise more often for right answers than did their low-achieving classmates. Cooper and Good also observed in the classrooms of the students they interviewed. Their observations supported students' perceptions, but also pointed out that students tended to exaggerate the differentiated treatment.

Good and Weinstein (1986) combined the results of the preceding studies on patterns of teacher interactions with students who differ in expectations and achievement levels. They concluded that teachers provide high-achieving students with: (a) more opportunities to perform publicly, (b) more time to think, (c) more alignments using higher level thinking skills, (d) more choice in assignments, (e) more opportunity for self-evaluation and more honest feedback, and (f) more respect for individual interests and needs.

In reviewing the research on differential teacher-student interaction patterns, studies were done to determine the effects not only at the individual student level as has just been reported, but as those effects that might occur at the group level, classroom level and school level. Weinstein (1976) studied reading group membership in first grade classrooms. He concluded that reading group membership added twenty-five percent to the variance in midyear reading achievement that could be predicted beyond what was predictable from readiness scores taken at the beginning of the year. Achievement was higher for students placed in

high groups versus students placed in two groups. Hievert (1983) suggested that longer reading assignments with more time for discussion are given to high groups. Allington (1983) added that high groups experience fewer interruptions for mistakes and receive more time and better cues for self-correcting mistakes rather than just being given the answer. Low groups spend most of their time decoding words and answering factual questions while students in higher groups concentrate on comprehension and higher level questions (Boorko & Eisenhart, 1986).

Brophy and Evertson (1976) discovered that teachers differ in their expectations of their class as a whole. Those teachers who believe all of their students are capable of mastering objectives seem to have a "can do" attitude and are successful in motivating students and eliciting achievement.

Ashton and Webb (1986) compared teachers who differed in sense of efficacy. Teachers with low-efficacy spent most of their time enforcing rules while high-efficacy teachers focused on instruction.

Cooper and Good (1983) stressed that teachers with high expectations for their classes did not accept low level performance and spent more time on more complex learning rather than boring, routine-style lessons.

Teacher-expectation effects are particularly evident at the class level in schools where tracking is used. Finley

(1984) concluded that teachers prefer teaching high-track classes and provide these students with the opportunities to experience high-level concepts and more challenging and independent assignments. More thorough planning also seems to occur for high-track classes (Brookover et al., 1979).

Brookover et al. (1982) stated that teacher expectations and evaluations of students' ability are linked to student achievement in two ways. First, high expectations seem to produce more and better instruction, where low expectations perpetuate less instruction and poorer quality of instruction. Second, teacher expectations have an indirect influence on the student learning climate of a school. Factors such as the percent of students expected to finish high school and the number believed capable of going to college, expectations for student behavior, and the amount of time devoted to learning all affect the overall climate of a particular school. If students sense that teachers have high expectations concerning the preceding factors, then they are more likely to work harder to achieve than if those expectations have been conveyed in lower terms. In a review of school effectiveness and school improvement programs, Good and Brophy (1986) concluded that in schools where student learning is maximized, teachers have higher expectations for all students and are committed to helping students achieve success.

Does it make a difference to students whether teachers like what they teach or not? Matthews (1984) concluded that when teachers enjoy the subject matter they teach, the feeling becomes contagious. Students who like their teachers are more likely to follow their teachers' lead. If their teachers are enthusiastic about a particular subject, then their students will probably feel similarly. The reverse, Matthews says, is also true. "If teachers do not believe the skills and concepts they teach are important there is little reason to suspect they will be able to convince students that what they teach is important" (p.35). He continues to suggest several ways teachers can demonstrate the importance of a topic to their students: (a) thorough planning, (b) sufficient time allocated to particular content, and (c) professional use of discretionary time. Thorough planning communicates the significance of the information to be shared. When teachers come to class well prepared with all materials and equipment readily available, students sense the importance of the lesson.

Additionally, when teachers enthusiastically use the full amount of time teaching, students sense the importance of the lesson. Rosenshine and Stevens (1986) wrote that students need sufficient instructional time in order to process effectively what is being taught. Squires, Huitt, and Segars (1983) reviewed research on teacher effectiveness

and stressed that the greater the amount of time students spend on academic tasks the greater the effect on achievement. Academic learning time is particularly important for the low-achieving students (Berliner, 1984). can also keep students focused on the planned content.

The third suggestion made by Matthews (1984) to convince students that the teacher values her subject matter is for students to observe the teacher using discretionary time in a professional manner. When teachers have the opportunity to attend an educational conference or are pursuing an advanced degrees, students should be made aware of these experiences. This allows students to see the importance of learning to the teacher. Ericksen (1984) summed up the importance of the value teachers place on leaning when he said:

"What the teacher values, students begin to value and motivation has taken root. It is unfortunate when teachers are assigned to teach a subject for which they feel little enthusiasm or interest; their negative attitudes show through....A better motivational climate prevails when teaching reflects a genuine excitement about the subject matter" (p.42-43).

It is apparent, through the research that has been completed in this area, that teachers affect learning in one of two ways: a) directly, through use, or lack of use, of effective teaching techniques (Brophy and Good, 1974);

(Edmonds, 1978), or b) indirectly, through expectations of students (Brophy and Good, 1974); or through affective behaviors (Alexander, Entwisle, Thompson, 1978; Fordham and Ogbu, 1986).

A classic, but highly challenged, study of teacher expectations was conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1978). They presented one-fifth of the children in a school as intellectually advanced. The children were selected at random. At the end of the year the selected children actually scored significantly higher than the rest of the students. The researchers concluded that the results could only be explained as "self-fulfilling prophecy". Unfortunately, teachers were assumed to have behaved differently toward the "advanced" students, but no direct observation of teachers was included in the design of the study.

Additional studies of teacher expectations have found that teachers have lower expectations of black students and that those low expectations adversely affect performance (Rubovits and Maehr, 1973; Persell, 1978; Rist, 1970). In a study patterned after that of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) Rubovits and Maehr (1977) observed teacher behavior toward students whose abilities had been randomly "determined." Students who had been labeled as gifted were given more time and called on more often. In short, the teachers expected them to do well. Within the gifted group, white students

were treated more positively than black. Most of the criticism leveled at gifted students by the teacher was directed at the black students.

Students are more highly motivated to learn when teachers can relate what is being taught to their personal welfare. Matthews (1984) stated: "If students are to be expected to exert a great deal of effort to achieve in school, then they should be aware that what they learn in school will have a direct influence on their personal lives" (p.39). Matthews suggested beginning by stressing the importance of students receiving a high school diploma. Without graduation validation, students will likely have to select manual labor jobs that give them little opportunity to grow intellectually. Matthews also pointed out that one must have the skills to perform a particular job even when the diploma is in hand. Helping students understand that the learning experiences provided at school will assist them in being qualified for jobs in the future provides the student with hope for economic success.

Matthews stressed that economic success is not the only ingredient students need to experience a quality life. Schooling helps students develop other skills which are necessary components to becoming a happy, healthy member of society. Teachers must show to students the practical applications of everyday lessons in mathematics, language arts, science, health, and social studies. Students need to

be taught the importance of appreciating and participating in the cultural expressions of the fine arts and humanities. Levine and Long (1981), Hunter (1984), and Squires, Huitt, and Segars (1983) contend that explaining why a particular lesson is relevant to the students themselves is the most important part of the instruction.

Grossnickle (1989) expressed the importance of teachers encouraging students to become self-motivated by helping them focus on their future goals. He shared a number of activities teachers could use to promote students' interest in the future utility of schooling, including exploring biographies of successful people and researching and discussing career opportunities and qualifications. Sleeter and Grant (1986) also emphasized the need for students to become self-motivated and for teachers to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to take charge of their future.

Students Attitudes Toward Their Teachers

Success or failure in school seems to be deeply rooted in one's self-concept. Chandler (1985) stated that many teachers admit there is no substitute for the classroom teacher in developing a positive self-concept in students (Alexander, 1971). Teachers have a crucial role in forming a good self-concept in their students, and the school is

often the first organization where a person is marked as a success or failure (Gilmer, 1970). Wintre & Crowley studied 122 males and 125 females ranging in ages from 13 to 18 years. The results indicated a significant four-way interaction between self-worth, locus of control, situation and consultant choice. Teachers were a large factor in the study.

Common denominators of good teachers is one that creates a positive self-concept for their students and has high expectations of students both academically and behavioral (Berloner, 1984). Students may perform as teachers expect them to perform (Rosenthal, 1971). If teachers expect more, they may get more, but if expectations are low, student achievement may be low (Watson, 1980).

In a frequently cited study, Davidson and Lange (1960) attempted to "relate children's perception of their teachers feelings toward them to self-perception, academic achievement and classroom behavior" (p. 166). The major conclusions included:

1. The children's perception of their teachers' feelings toward them correlated positively and significantly with self-perception. The child with the more favorable self-image was the one who more likely than not perceived his teacher's feelings toward him as more favorable.
2. The more positive the children's perceptions of their teachers' feelings, the better was their academic achievement and the more desirable their classroom behavior as rated by the teachers.
3. Further, children in the upper and middle social class groups perceived their teachers' feelings

toward them more favorably than did the children in the lower social class group. (p. 116)

Ford (1985) observed that the way "a student perceived school will probable have some bearing on how well or how poorly he/she performs" (p. 82). Her conclusions suggested that black students may or may not have a poor self-concept. Those who demonstrated a high self-acceptance score also saw their teachers as individuals who "genuinely liked, accepted, and understood them and treated them as responsible individuals" (p. 88). She concluded that since a negative self-concept tended to result in a negative view of teacher or school, that those negative views could result in lower achievement.

In an attempt to increase the understanding of black achievement, Holliday (1985) looked at the inter-relationships of a variety of factors such as a child's school self-esteem, teacher attitudes, and academic achievement. Among other findings, the study found that "black children's achievement is minimally influenced by their own self-perceptions but significantly influenced by teachers' perceptions denoting orientation and evaluation transactions" (p. 78).

Berloner (1984) commented on teacher expectations:

When a teacher communicates high academic expectations and such expectations become a part of the classroom and school ethos, achievement is positively affected; when teachers create classrooms that are safe, orderly, and academically focused, achievement is increased; when the technology now available to teach sensible

management of behavior problems is used, the opportunity for learning increases; and when the technology available to create cooperative learning environments is used, positive results ensure. Teaching takes place in a context. It can never be decontextualized. The context, that environment for learning that must be developed in order for classroom or schools to be judged successful, appears to require a press for both prosocial and academically oriented behavior. (p.69)

Matthews and Holmes (1991) expressed the belief that teachers cannot expect to have the potential for effectively motivating their students to learn if students do not feel favorable toward them. They suggest that teachers who interact frequently and positively with their students encourage positive student attitudes. Other suggestions for teachers to help develop positive student attitudes include:

1. Act cheerful.
2. Refrain from complaining.
3. Interact consistently with students.
4. Avoid frequently changing rules.
5. Indicate you care about students.
6. Center conversations around student concerns.
7. Be courteous around students.
8. Help students with things that are important to them. (p. 32)

Firestone (1989) maintained that students' attitudes toward school can greatly depend on the teachers with whom they work and the respect they perceive they receive from their teachers. Students relate that respect or the lack of it is felt in the actions and other communications received from their teachers. Earlier, Hawley and Hawley (1979) emphasized that open communication between teachers and students can encourage a cooperative spirit and motivate students' desire

to learn. Teachers can become a very influential "significant other" to their students if students are able to sense a caring, positive attitude on the part of their teachers.

The teacher communicates expectations through regular homework assignments (Honig, 1983) and by giving students the opportunity to exercise responsibility (Rutter et al., 1979). Additionally, the distribution of questions during instructional periods reflects teacher expectations (Kerman, 1978). According to Edmonds (cited in Brandt, 1982), teachers in less effective schools were more likely to question students who they anticipated would not know the answer; the opposite was more prevalent in effective schools. Other means through which teachers communicate expectations are by seating arrangement, use of direct instruction, choices of learning new materials, and the amount of work required (U.S. Department of Education, 1986).

More than anyone else in the school the teacher bears the ultimate responsibility for the effect of the school climate on the child. As Kelley (1980) noted:

While the quality of the total school environment will influence the climate of a particular classroom, the presence of an effective and efficient classroom environment in both good and bad school environments leads to a single conclusion: teachers are accountable for the climate in their own classrooms. Effective teachers accept this accountability. (p. 56)

Teachers as significant others must reinforce the idea that students can successfully pursue the academics and the social and personal goals of the school.

The theories and conceptual models of motivation reviewed in the preceding pages of this chapter provide teachers with a better understanding of why students initiate and maintain certain behaviors. However, the most important task facing classroom teachers is how to use this information to provide the instructional environment which will motivate students to learn at their individual optimum levels.

Self-Concept and Middle-Level Students

As children progress through the grade levels of school, their attitudes toward school become more important. By the time children reach the middle-level grades, attitudes toward the school account for as much as 20% of a child's academic success .

Worchel, Little, and Alcala (1990) studied depression and self-concept of cognitive ability in students in grades 5,6,and 9 in 360 public schools to determine if depression could be a factor in lack of academic achievement. They measured students' self-perceptions by using the Children's Depression Inventory and Peer Nomination Inventory of depression. The two inventories indicated that 18% of the

students were to be classified as depressed and 25% of the students were to be classified as non-depressed. The researches concluded that depressed students were more likely than non-depressed students to have negative self-concepts and negative expectations of themselves on tasks of a cognitive nature when the academic expectations for themselves were unfavorable (Worchel, Little Alcala, 1990). Soares and Soares (1971) studied 514 disadvantaged and advantaged students in grades four through eight. They tested the self-concepts of all students by using 20 pairs of bi-polar traits expressed in sentence form. The students were asked to respond on a 6-point ranking scale. The researchers observed that children in both the disadvantaged group and the advantaged group reported positive self-perceptions. These researchers, however, did not correlate student self-perceptions with measures of academic achievement.

Towberman & McDonald (1993) found that there were underlying dimensions of self-concept that relate to adolescent alcohol and drug use. Four dimensions of lack of self-concept were identified: negative image, lack of self confidence, lack of bonding and ineffectiveness. Students who exhibited a poor self-concept were more likely to drink or use drugs.

Brookover, Erikson, and Joiner (1967) reported the results of a five-year study involving 307 white females and

255 white males. The participants were seventh-grade students at the beginning of the study. The study was designed to examine the combined effect of self-concepts and the perceived evaluations that significant others had of the individual. A questionnaire was administered to the students during the fall of each school year. An interview consisting of questions about the student's perceptions of significant others was conducted after each administration of the questionnaire. Analysis of the data collected from the interviews yielded positive correlations ranging from .50 to .77 for the period of study. Brookover et al. indicated that these results supported the hypotheses that perceived evaluations of significant others contribute to an individual's self-concept of ability. Podsen (1981) noted students with school behavior problems tend to have low self-esteem. Keltikangas (1990) studied 894 randomly selected Finnish adolescents for six years and found that there is a difference in stability of self-concept when gender is addressed.

Positive self-concepts lead to positive attitudes toward school, while negative views of self point to negative views of school (Houlihan, 1983). Fink (1962) conducted a study to determine if self-concept was related to academic achievement. Eighth- and ninth-grade students were chosen to participate in the study. The students were divided into two groups according to their grade-point

averages (GPA). Those students whose GPA's fell above the median GPA for the ninth grade were designated as high achievers, and those students whose GPAs fell below the median GPA were designated as low achievers. The self-concepts of the students were measured by several instruments used by school psychologists. A student's self-concept was judged adequate or inadequate on the basis of the psychologists' judgments. The data were treated by chi square. The results of the study confirmed that a relationship existed between adequacy of self-concept and levels of student academic achievement.

The peer group plays an important role in the lives of all adolescents. Dusek (1977) stated the following:

The adolescent peer group clearly exists and is influential in a number of ways. These influences are, for the most part, limited to relatively short-term aspects of development such as dress codes and taste in music. Parental effect on adolescent development is in areas of more long-term concern, such as moral values and orientation. Moreover, since the peer group is composed largely of those who come from backgrounds quite similar to the individual adolescent's background, the peer group may act to reinforce parental taught values and ideals. (p. 200)

The peer group is recognized as being a significant other in the life of the adolescent. Individuals learn rules of social behavior from others and learn that a healthy self-concept depends on a healthy other's concept (Sprigle, 1980).

Arth and Freeman (1983) also emphasized that peers are influential in the lives of adolescents. Adjustment

problems appear when peer values conflict with the values of other significant persons in the life of the adolescent. Teachers and administrators must recognize that peers have a direct influence on the middle-level school student. For the middle-level student, the teacher is not the most important person in the classroom.

Popularity within a group is important in establishing individual self-concept, and a lack of self-concept in this area may cause a student to develop feelings of inferiority (Fromm, 1941). Gilmer (1970) stated the following in reference to evaluation of self:

An individual's evaluation of himself is determined gradually by his perception of his relative position in some group of which he is a member, and also in the rating he would give himself in a group of which is not a member but to which he aspires (p.92).

Peer relationships are important for all adolescents but appear to be of particular importance to the underachiever (Battle, 1982).

Great harm may be done to the adolescent that is being constantly mistreated by peers. Kizziar and Hagedorn (1979) emphasized the following:

All of us, children, adolescents, and adults perceive ourselves in large number from the feedback we get from others. If as a child one receives input from parents and significant others in the family that make him feel secure, attractive, loved, and capable--an "I count" person--he develops a positive self-concept. If, on the other hand, the input from his peer group, teachers, and neighbors are that he is a failure, or ugly, or obese, he may tend, in spite of his ideal early environment, to grow up not liking himself very much. As he matures, inputs continue to come from

people important in the youngster's eyes and they confirm or alter his self-concept, instilling both negative and positive attitudes toward himself. (p.12)

Recognizing and understanding the peer influence of the middle-level school student is essential in the development of a positive school climate.

Self-Concept and Ethnicity

In a three-year study of three types of schools--desegregated schools, integrated schools, and magnet schools--Easton, Bennett and Seymore (1987) questioned what possible effects race and school type have on student achievement. The student population in these schools included White, Black and Hispanic students. They tested the following: school type and student achievement, race and student achievement, and the interaction of race and school type on student achievement. The researchers concluded that school type made no real differences in reading achievement gains. The Hispanic and Black students progressed at about the same rate as White students in all school types. The distinguishing factor was the self-concept of students in relation to their academic achievement.

Hishiki (1969) compared the self-perceptions of career choices, and academic achievement scores of 65 sixth-grade Mexican-American girls in east Los Angeles, California, and 70 non- Mexican-American sixth grade girls from Georgia. He

asked the girls their most likely choices of careers. The Mexican-American girls' most frequently chosen response was teacher/secretary; the least chosen response was newspaper reporter. In the group of girls from Georgia, the most frequently chosen response was actress, the least chosen response was engineer. His findings indicated that self-concept scores were significantly lower for the Mexican-American group, and that significant relationships existed between the self-concept and selected factors of academic achievement in both groups.

Hargrove (1981) found that black students taught by black teachers demonstrated higher reading comprehension and vocabulary gains than those taught by white teachers. In an earlier study, Stout (1973) reported similar results. He not only found that black students in the study performed better with a black teacher than with a white teacher, but also found indications that black students' performance was better when affective language was used rather than neutral language. Morgan (1977) reported mixed results that showed black students with greater reading achievement when taught by white teachers

In a study that showed black and white students at comparable levels of achievement at the beginning of the first grade, Entwistle and Alexander (1988) found some disturbing results. At the end of the first grading period there was a striking difference between the math and reading

scores for black and white children, with blacks scoring significantly lower in both areas.

Although the study raised many questions, the authors made two important observations. First, the data gathered suggested that for black students, teachers are significant others more than they are for white students. Second, Blacks received mixed messages from their teachers. They received conduct grades that were positively related to their reading and math grades but negatively correlated to their achievement test scores.

Entwistle and Alexander (1988) found that teachers marked the conduct of high-achieving black students as lower than that of lower-achieving Blacks. Passive black students seemed to be rewarded by the conduct grades they received.

White teachers have been observed to provide negative feedback to black students at a rate two and one-half times greater than for white students (Aaron and Powell, 1982). Other studies showed black students receiving less praise than white students (Gay, 1974; Mangold, 1974; Grant, 1984).

In examining the teachers' relationship to achievement, studies consistently found that teachers' expectations directly affected achievement. In addition, it was found that teachers routinely treated black students differently from white. Expectations were lower and criticism was higher. An overview of all literature related to teacher behavior strongly indicated a need for blacks to be educated

by teachers who feel positively about them and who believe that they can achieve.

A fundamental question stated by Edmonds (1978) is: "Are there schools that are "instructionally effective" for poor children?" (p. 34) Weber (1971), Lezotte, Edmonds, and Ratner (1974), and Brookover (1976) were a few of the researchers providing the resounding answer, yes. In a summary of the studies, Edmonds (1978) stated: "While recognizing the importance of family background in developing a child's character, personality, and intelligence, I cannot overemphasize my rejection of the notion that the school is relieved of its instructional obligations when teaching the children of the poor." (p.31) He voiced a mutual recommendation that further research into school and teacher effectiveness is important. Literature related to the nature of achievement and the current status of education provided evidence of the complexities of the factors related to black student achievement. It also pointed to evidence that all students can learn. As a result of this review, an investigation of other variables generally associated with achievement was indicated. The first of two areas studied was self-concept, a characteristic historically associated with achievement.

Caplin (1966) conducted a study of black students and found that those with more positive self-concept reports also tended to have higher achievement.

As stated previously, Legette (1979) found a significant relationship between self-concept and achievement. This relationship was true for both the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale (CSCS) and the Coopersmith SEI. When the data were further analyzed, race differences were found. Black students' Piers-Harris scores were significantly relational in only two areas of the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT), science and reading. She also found that "self concept scores and teacher-assigned grades, with the exception of mathematics, were markedly lower for Blacks than for Whites" (p.100). A higher relationship was found between self concept and achievement test scores for Blacks than between self concept and grades assigned by teacher.

Laryea (1972) found a significant correlation between academic self-concept and achievement for black and white sixth graders. The only difference in race was the fact that the correlation for white girls was greater than that of black girls. The difference was significant at the .05 level.

Lay and Wakstein (1984) analyzed data on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) used for college admissions. Extreme differences were found between the scores of Blacks and Whites, with Blacks averaging over 200 points lower on combined SAT scores. When self-concept was analyzed it was found that when academic achievement was equal, Blacks

actually had higher reports on all three dimensions of ability than Whites. Although there were differences in self-concept based on geographical areas of the country, the difference did not affect the relationship between race and self-concept.

Zirkel and Moses (1971) found that the black children in their study actually had higher self-concepts than the white children. Trowbridge, Trowbridge, and Trowbridge (1972) found similar results with black children scoring a mean of 73.6 and other children scoring a mean of 69.0 on the Coopersmith SEI.

Rosenberg and Simmons (1972) offered a reference group theory. They suggested that Blacks do not demonstrate low levels of self-esteem because they evaluate themselves in comparison to significant others who may also achieve at low academic levels. This theory did not account for instances in which self-esteem is reported to be higher than that of whites. Stephan and Rosenfield (1979) concluded from their study that Blacks do not differ from Whites in self-esteem. There was no evidence of self-rejection of their ethnic group. Blacks "actually evaluated blacks more favorably than Whites or Mexican Americans evaluated their group members" (p. 714).

Entwistle, Alexander, Pallas, and Cadigan (1987) found that there was no difference in children's academic self-

image according to race or parent background at the beginning of the first grade.

Although a number of studies cited evidence of negative self-concept in Blacks, the more current theories generally disagreed. Most recent studies found that assumptions based purely on race are unsubstantiated.

Previously cited support for the positive relationship between achievement and self-concept, and conflicting data regarding the self-concept of race,, dictated a review of studies that examined all three variables.

Brookover and Schneig (1975) conducted a study of 24 schools focusing on social and psychological variables that accounted for differences in student achievement. A major emphasis in the study was to control for socioeconomic (SEOC) influences. High SEOC with low standardized achievement scores and low SEOC with high standardized achievement scores made up the student sample. Academic standards, teacher expectations and beliefs about students' learning capabilities, and students' beliefs about their own potential to learn were revealed as contributors to achievement. A significant finding from the study was the importance of students' levels of frustration resulting from the teacher's perception of the individual's learning ability. In cases where teachers perceived that students could learn, students reported less frustration and were more apt to have higher achievement scores. As active

participants in the learning process, principals and teachers set the tone for student achievement by creating school climates that foster learning (Goodlad, 1983).

Hurt et. al. (1978) reported that there is no single leadership style identified for the principal that is more closely associated with student achievement than any other style. Students seem to achieve as well under an authoritarian style of leadership, as they do under a democratic style of leadership. However, students seem to have a more positive attitude toward the total learning environment and appear to be better adjusted when the principal's leadership style is democratic. While the autocratic style may serve the academic needs of students, the democratic leadership style appears to assist students in satisfying their interpersonal needs.

Anderson's (cited in Ellis, 1988) study identified four factors that shape a school climate: ecology (physical variables), milieu (characteristics of individuals in the school), social system (patterns or rules of operation and interacting in the school), and culture (variables that reflect norms, belief systems, values, cognitive structures, and attitudes of persons within the school). Of all these variables, those pertaining to rapport between school administrators and teachers were found to be most consistently correlated with a good school climate and

student achievement.

Self-Concept and Grade Level and Teacher Influence

Brophy (1987) stated that:

Student motivation to learn can be conceptualized either as a general trait or a situation specific state. The trait of motivation to learn is an enduring disposition to strive for content knowledge and skill mastery in learning situations. The state of motivation to learn exists when student engagement in a particular activity is guided by the intention of acquiring the knowledge or mastering the skill that the activity is designed to teach. (Brophy, p.40)

In a synthesis of research on motivational strategies, Brophy (1987) developed a list of strategies suitable for application by teachers in the classroom. The development and organization of the list was guided by Feathers' expectancy x value theory. This theory assumes that no effort will be invested in a task if people believe they cannot perform the task successfully no matter how much effort is expended, or if they do not value the outcomes of the task. Therefore, classroom teachers, in order to motivate their students, will have to make sure tasks are designed for success with the exertion of reasonable effort, and teachers must also be able to help students identify the value of completing the tasks.

Brophy identified four preconditions that must be in effect in order for any motivational strategies to be successful. A supportive environment which includes

encouragement, patience, and a comfortableness to take risks is the first condition. Second, Brophy pointed out, boredom or frustration may occur if tasks are too easy or too difficult; therefore, the appropriate level of challenge is necessary. The selection of meaningful learning objectives makes learning worthwhile and relevant to the student's future endeavors. And finally, specific motivational strategies should not be overused or their effectiveness will diminish.

Dweck and Elliott (1983) concluded that effort and persistence are seen as dominant qualities in people who set goals of moderate difficulty level, commit themselves to achieving these goals, and focus on achieving success rather than avoiding failure. Bandura and Schunk (1981) suggested that effort and persistence are stronger qualities in people who believe they have the efficacy to achieve success than in those who do not. Weiner (1984) linked effort and persistence to those individuals who attribute their success to internal or controllable causes rather than external or uncontrollable causes.

Brophy (1987) added to his list of motivational strategies those that assist students in maintaining success expectations, efficacy perceptions, and causal attributions. First, teachers must make sure that students achieve success consistency if they want students to expect to succeed. This can be accomplished by providing the appropriate level

of instruction, task preparation, guided practice and specific feedback. Teachers must teach students how to set and work towards goals that are proximal, specific, and challenging, and then provide feedback to assist students with assessing their progress. It is essential that students learn to link effort with successful outcomes. Teachers should present effort as an investment of time and energy that leads to knowledge or skill development. Lastly, teachers must provide remedial socialization for discouraged students. Additional instruction, practice opportunities, make-up exams, attribution retraining, performance contracts, and mastery learning techniques are suggested strategies.

Brophy suggested three strategies for motivating students by using extrinsic rewards: (a) offer rewards for good or improved performance (material rewards, special privileges, honor rolls, displays of good work, praise, and opportunities to do things with the teacher), (b) structure appropriate competition based on individual or team merits (best used with practice tasks), and (c) call attention to the instrumental value of academic activities (how the knowledge or skills developed will enable students to meet their own needs). Extrinsic task strategies link successful task performance with consequences students value rather than with the value of the task itself. Extrinsic rewards are more effective when used with more routine tasks rather

than those requiring creativity. Students must believe they have a chance to receive the rewards with reasonable effort in order for them to be considered motivators.

The use of intrinsic rewards is called for when teachers have prepared academic activities that students will participate in willingly. This is a more difficult endeavor, but can be accomplished if teachers will: (a) adapt tasks to students' interests; (b) include novelty and variety when planning activities; (c) provide opportunities for students to respond actively; (d) provide immediate feedback to guide subsequent responses; (e) allow students to create finished products; (f) include fantasy or simulation elements; (g) incorporate game-like features into exercises; (h) include higher-level objectives and divergent questions; and (i) provide opportunities to interact with peers (Brophy, 1987).

Brophy described the most important level of motivational strategies used with students as those which motivate students to learn the content or skills being taught, not just to enjoy the specific activities. Teachers must consistently model interest in learning so that students see that the teacher values learning as rewarding in itself. This can be accomplished by calling attention to examples or applications of subject-matter knowledge in everyday living, recent books and newspaper articles read, or movies seen.

The communication of desirable expectations and attributions which projects the belief that students do, in fact, share the teacher's interest in learning helps students take on this characteristic more easily (Brophy, 1987). Marshall (1987) emphasized that teachers should let students know they expect them to be curious, to learn about and understand concepts, to master skills, and see that what they are learning is applicable to their everyday lives.

"Most classroom activities should be structured as learning experiences rather than tests" (Brophy & Good, 1990, p. 430). This type of environment minimizes students' performance anxiety and allows them to be more relaxed and able to concentrate on the learning task rather than worry about meeting performance expectations. When it is necessary to use assessment devices, students should be encouraged to assess their progress rather than compare their results to others.

The projection of intensity and enthusiasm conveys to students that the topic is important, interesting and worth their time. Timing, nonverbal expressions and gestures, cuing, and voice inflection are methods teachers might use to implement intensity and enthusiasm. Bettencourt et al (1983) stressed that if the teacher models excitement about a topic, then students will often adopt the same attitude.

Brophy (1987) suggested that students' interest in a task can be induced by verbalizing why the task is valuable

to the students. Curiosity or suspense about a particular topic can be aroused by posing questions and making students feel the need to obtain more information. When students seem disinterested in a topic because they think they already know everything about it, Brophy suggested that dissonance or cognitive conflict be induced. This can be accomplished by pointing out the unexpected, noting exceptions to rules, or calling attention to unusual elements.

Brophy concluded his list of strategies to motivate students to learn with the following: (a) making abstract content more personal, concrete, or familiar; (b) inducing students to generate their own motivation to learn (asking them to list topics of interest, questions they would like answered, or things they find surprising); (c) stating learning objectives and providing advance organizers, and (d) modeling task-related thinking and problem solving. These strategies are suggested as systematic methods of developing student motivation to learn.

William Purkey (1984), author of Inviting School Success: A Self-Concept Approach to Teaching and Learning, presented teachers with an understanding of the importance of being able to see positive attributes in students that they may not see in themselves. He expressed this belief by quoting Pullias (1975):

"One of the greatest functions of a teacher is to give his students a "vision of greatness," which is a figurative way of saying a clear picture of their potential as human beings and of the possibility of realizing that which they can be.... The individual cannot or will not see and take advantage of opportunity, however physically available it may be, unless he is brought to believe that he has possibilities for growth and that this opportunity is a door for him (p.173)."

Purkey stressed that teachers develop positive perceptions of their students by seeing them as able, valuable, and responsible. Purkey defined intelligence as the "level of mental functioning that is reflected in the quality or effectiveness of an individual's behavior. This level of mental functioning can be strongly influenced by either facilitating or debilitating environments" (p.38). Teachers who believe their students are able establish environments which facilitate and motivate students to learn. Purkey stated, "Students develop best when they share the company of teachers who see them as possessing relatively untapped abilities in myriad areas, and who invite them to realize their potential" (p. 39).

When students are treated as persons of value, their behavior will reflect this belief. Purkey said that teachers who believe in the value of their students become personally and professionally involved with their students.

He emphasized the importance of this behavior especially with disadvantaged students. Brophy (1975) supported this viewpoint by pointing out that the most effective teachers of disadvantaged or minority group students stress the value of the individual student.

Finally, Purkey emphasized the importance of teachers viewing students as responsible--capable of choosing to learn. Purkey's invitational education assumes that students will want to learn those things that are important in their own lives. When teachers establish a learning environment which encourages students to make meaningful choices about their education, students are likely to learn more.

Ellis (1990), an elementary school principal, related a story which is a good example of the difference in a teacher who is inviting and one who is uninviting. He recalled an eight year old student whose name was Coby. Coby as a third-grader was constantly in trouble. Ellis was interrupted one day by a loud, angry verbal exchange between Coby and his third grade teacher. "'You will do what I say!' shouted the teacher. 'No, I won't and you can't make me!' Coby shouted right back" (p.34). Fortunately, the school year was almost over, but Ellis worried about next year and what was to become of Coby. A strange thing happened to Coby in fourth grade. He was placed in the room of a teacher who believed in hugging. She hugged Coby the

first day of school and every day after that. Coby was never sent to the principal and made the honor roll four of the six grading periods. Coby truly experienced invitational education in the classroom of a teacher who saw him as an exception to the rule.

CHAPTER III

Methods

Subjects

The middle-level student was chosen as the sample age group since, according to statistics compiled in 1987 by the National Center for Self-Esteem, as students get older, their self-esteem often diminishes. They supply the following quantitative data:

- * 80 percent of kindergarten students have high self-esteem
- * By the time students reach grade five, the number has dropped to twenty percent.
- * By the time students graduate from high school, the number of students having a positive self-image drops to five percent.
- * Fewer than two percent of college seniors exhibit high self-esteem.

Given this information, it is reasonable to conclude that school is one component affecting a student's self-concept. Thus, it is essential to this researcher to have

investigated how the downward spiral trend mentioned quantitatively can be reversed. In addition, grades five, six and seven participated in the study since the administrators of the schools wanted to follow the students for a period of time once this study was completed. The eighth grade students would have graduated and not been able to have follow-up evaluations; thus, they were excluded from the study. Grade seven will be monitored for one year while the other two grades will be monitored until they graduate.

Students identified by Public Law 94-142 as handicapped, and who receive their classroom instruction according to an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.), were exempt from the sample. This was done since their responses would not have been considered valid by the measurement instrument.

Instrumentation

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (PHSCS) was used to measure student self-concept. This instrument was chosen over others since it possessed high validity and reliability and was reported to be the most psychometrically sound instrument for assessing children's self-esteem. The PHSCS measures an individual child's self-evaluative attitudes and behaviors which have a bearing on self-concept. The measure consists of an 80-item self-report

questionnaire that was divided into six subscales: behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity and happiness and satisfaction. Subscales were scored in the direction of positive self-concept so that a high score on a particular subscale indicates a high level of assessed self-concept within the specific dimension. A total score was computed by summing the totals from each of the six subscales.

The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was administered to selected portion of the school's faculty. This scale has a high validity when used with adults ages 19 to 64 years of age. Since all faculty members in this study fall within that age grouping, this instrument was selected for this study. The faculty members were informed of the purpose of the survey and the importance of the assessment. They were assured that the responses would be kept confidential. All faculty members with students in the middle grade level that had been given the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale participated in the study by answering the questions in the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. Those 34 teachers do in fact comprise the faculty sample. The information obtained from the faculty gave this researcher added information about the teachers' self-concept.

Procedures

An examination of a large urban Illinois school system identified six schools that were utilized to represent the population in the system. The schools chosen to participate were selected on the basis of student ethnic population. It was very important to this researcher to give a broad representation of ethnic groups for purposes of comparison between groups.. Included in the study were 102 White students (13%), 245 were Black (32%), 30 were Asian (4%), 293 were Hispanic (38%), 40 were Puerto Rican (5%) 5 were Cuban (0.7%), 43 students selected the "Other" category (6%) and seven failed to identify their ethnicity (0.9%). The six schools chosen also allowed this researcher to include a large sample of students. 765 students participated in this study. The following indicates the number from each school:

School A had 151 students participate

School B had 127 students participate

School C had 130 students participate

School D had 123 students participate

School E had 152 students participate

School F had 82 students participate

Each school was visited by this researcher. The principal of each school introduced this researcher to the teachers included in the study. The researcher and the teacher mutually agreed upon a time of the day to administer the

survey to the students. The researcher went to each classroom at the appointed time and administered the surveys in the following manner: the teacher responded to her/his survey while the researcher explained, administered, and collected the surveys from the students. It is important to note that while the Piers-Harris self-concept scale has 80 short response yes/no items, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale has 100 five point scale questions and answers. Thus, the teachers required, on an average, between 10 to 15 minutes longer than their students required to respond to the survey instrument. The researcher remained in the room monitoring students' silent independent assignments until the teacher completed his/her survey as well. All schools participating in the study were finished with the surveys between the school hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. during the months of May and June, 1994.

The students were assured that the surveys were not a test, but rather instruments to provide school personnel with information that could help create a better environment for them. Students were encouraged to answer honestly. Every attempt was made to put the students at ease. Students were informed that responses would remain anonymous and that teachers would not have access to the completed forms. The teachers were assured that the surveys were not a test, but rather instruments to provide school personnel with information that could help create a better environment

for them. Teachers were encouraged to answer honestly. Every attempt was made to put the teachers at ease. Teachers were informed that responses would remain anonymous and that administrators would not have access to the completed forms. Following the collection of the completed questionnaires, results were computed in accordance with manual directions.

The dates from the two surveys provided information to assist educators to develop goals and a plan of action for promoting positive student self-esteem. More specifically, an analysis of the subscales scores has provided information that can help administrators decide whether to add, eliminate, continue, or adjust new or existing school programs. This study will provide useful information to educators that could facilitate the improvement of teacher self-concept, which could be instrumental in improving students' self-concept.

Data Analysis

Response frequencies were computed for respondents' demographic characteristics including grade level, gender and ethnicity. The t -Tests were used to determine whether significant differences ($p < .05$) existed between teachers' and their students' self-concept (Null Hypothesis 1), students' self-concept and gender (Null Hypothesis 2),

students' ethnicity (Null Hypothesis 3), and students' self-concept by grade-level (Null Hypothesis 4).

Composite data rather than individual student and teacher data was considered more relevant by this researcher in assessing data results to formulate conclusions and recommendations relative to the study.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher self-concept and their Illinois middle level urban students' self-concept, and students' self-concept in relation to their gender, ethnicity and grade level. This chapter presents the analysis of the data and is presented in the following order: students' demographic characteristics, teachers' demographic characteristics, student self-concept in relation to their gender, student self-concept in relation to their ethnicity and student self-concept in relation to their grade level.

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference between the self-concept of students and the self-concept of their teachers.
2. There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and the gender of the student.
3. There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and the ethnicity of the students.

4. There is no significant relationship between the self-concepts of students and the grade-level of the students.

Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

This section presents data regarding respondents' demographic characteristics. Although frequencies for the "no response" categories were reported, their percentages were not included in overall frequency computations.

The data presented indicated that the respondents' sample had 765 students in the study (406 females and 357 males, two subjects did not identify their gender) representing the fifth through seventh grade of six public schools in the Chicago metropolitan area. The breakdown of students by school was as follows: 1) 151 from school A (20%); 2) 127 from school B (17%); 3) 130 from school C (17%); 4) 123 from school D (16%); 5) 152 from school E (20%); and 6) 82 from school F (11%). Children were selected from primarily low to lower middle-class school districts in which the school population primarily consists of minority students. A break-down of ethnicity by school is represented in Table 1. In short, 102 students were White (13%), 245 were Black (32%), 30 were Asian (4%), 293 were Hispanic (38%), 40 were Puerto-Rican (5%), five were Cuban (0.7%), 43 selected the "Other" category (6%), and seven failed to identify their ethnicity (0.9%). In regard to the breakdown of subjects by grade: 235 were in the fifth

grade (31%), 268 were in the sixth grade (35%), and 262 were in the seventh grade (34%).

Thirty-four teachers (11 males and 23 females) also participated in the study, representing each school as follows: 1) six from school A (18%); 2) five from school B (15%); 3) seven from school C (21%); 4) six from school D (18%); 5) six from school E (18%); and 6) four from school F (12%). The breakdown of the teachers' ethnicity by school is displayed in Table 2. Of the total teacher sample: 16 were White (47%); 12 were Black (35%); one was Asian (3%); one was Hispanic (3%); one was Puerto-Rican (3%); one selected the "Other" category (3%), and two failed to disclose their ethnicity (6%). In regard to the breakdown of teachers by grade: 11 represent the fifth grade (32%), 13 represent the sixth grade (38%), and 10 represent the seventh grade (29%).

Table 1

Group percentile rank and t-test results for Null Hypothesis 1 for students' self-concept and teachers' self-concept scores by classroom

School	Grade	T-value	P-value
A	7	-3.00	<.002
A	7	4.65	<.001
A	6	12.89	<.001

Table 1 - Continued

A	6	-6.41	<.001
A	5	1.96	>.10
A	5	19.42	<.001
B	7	49.20	<.001
B	6	31.00	<.001
B	6	33.96	<.001
B	5	26.27	<.001
B	5	34.82	<.001
C	7	11.15	<.001
C	7	-4.29	<.001
C	6	24.22	<.001
C	6	20.96	<.001
C	6	18.18	<.001
C	5	-27.12	<.001
C	5	25.90	<.001
D	7	22.00	<.001
D	7	25.82	<.001
D	6	-26.72	<.001
D	6	6.59	<.001

Table 1 - Continued

D	5	26.11	<.001
D	5	16.82	<.001
E	7	13.60	<.001
E	7	19.33	<.001
E	6	32.80	<.001
E	6	20.00	<.001
E	5	27.07	<.001
E	5	9.22	<.001
F	7	21.23	<.001
F	6/7	26.52	<.001
F	6	24.48	<.001
F	5	20.35	<.001

The analyses for testing Null Hypothesis 1 are provided above. Thirty-four t-tests were performed by employing the percentile rank for both the students' and teachers' self-concept scores rather than their means. The percentile ranks were used instead of the means, as two different self-concept surveys were employed for gathering data as stated in the methods chapter. Percentile ranks were employed as the method of norming the self-concept scores for both the teachers and

their students. The results of the t-test are provided in Table 18. Of the thirty-four t-tests performed, thirty-three were found to be statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. In twenty-eight t-tests the t-value is a positive number, indicating the students' mean self-concept represented by a percentage was significantly higher than their teacher's self-concept, given that the P value is less than .05. Conversely, in five t-tests the t-value was a negative value which indicated that the teacher's self-concept was significantly higher than their students' self-concept, given that the P value is less than .05.

Table 2

Group means and ONEWAY ANOVA results for Null Hypothesis 2
Regarding students self-concept by gender

Student	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Males	406	50.62			
Females	357	52.74			
Totals	763		(1,762)	13.92	<.0002

The results of testing Null Hypothesis 2 are provided in table 2. A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-

concept of males and females. Results indicated a significant difference, $F(1,762)=13.92$, $p < .0002$, between males and females with females (mean=52.74) having a higher self-concept compared to males (mean=50.62).

Table 3

Group means and Oneway ANOVA results for Null Hypothesis 3
regarding students' self-concept by ethnicity

Race	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
White	102	51.55			
Black	245	50.20			
Asian	30	49.80			
Mexican	293	52.73			
Puerto Rican	40	52.48			
Cuban	5	52.40			
Other	43	52.58			
Total	758		(6,757)	2.76	<.012

The results of testing Null Hypothesis 3 were provided in Table 3. A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-

concept of students by ethnicity. Results indicated a significant difference, $F(6,757)=2.76$, $p < .012$. A Tukey (post-hoc-test) performs cross comparisons amongst all groups to locate the groups that were significantly different from one another. In table 3 it was used to locate the significant difference between the seven ethnic groups. Between the seven ethnic groups there was only one significant difference, it was found that the Mexican groups self-concept scores were significantly difference than their Black counterparts. The Tukey procedure indicated that Mexican students' self-concept (mean=52.73) differed significantly from the Black students' self-concept (mean=50.20).

Table 4

Group means and oneway ANOVA results for Null Hypothesis 4
regarding students' self-concept by grade

<u>Grade</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
5	235	51.98			
6	268	51.34			
7	262	51.58			
Totals	765		(2,764)	.42	>.65

The results of testing Null Hypothesis 4 are provided in

Table 4. A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference exists between the self-concept of students by grade. Results indicated no significant differences existed, $F(2,764)=.42$, $p > .65$. Findings indicates that students' self-concept are similar in grades 5, 6 and 7. No differences between grades were found. Thus, self-concepts in grades 5, 6 and 7 are similar in this study.

Summary

Data gathered from a sample of Illinois middle level urban students and their teachers were used to examine the relationship between teacher self-concept and their students' self-concept. Also students' self-concept in relation to their gender, ethnicity and grade level were examined. Descriptive statistics for students' self-concept scores by gender, ethnicity and school are included. Descriptive statistics are provided for the teachers' self-concept scores by gender, ethnicity and school. Student self-concept by classroom is described by means and standard deviations. Thirty-four t-tests were performed by employing the percentile rank for both the students' and teachers' self-concept scores rather than their means (Null Hypothesis 1). A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-concept of males and females (Null Hypothesis 2). A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference

existed between the self-concept of students by ethnicity (Null Hypothesis 3). A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference exists between the self-concept of students by grade level (Null Hypothesis 4).

Hypotheses one, two and three were rejected while hypothesis four was not. Results indicated that there is a significant difference between students' self-concept and their teacher's self-concept. Further results indicated that there is a significant difference between males and females, with females having a higher self-concept compared to the males. The Tukey procedure indicated that Hispanic students' self-concept differs significantly from the Black students' self-concept. Results indicate that there is no significant difference between the self-concept of students by grade. All grades have similar self-concepts.

Chapter V presents a discussion of the results.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Self-Concept of Students in Relation to the Self-Concept of their Teachers.

The literature reviewed referred directly and indirectly to the relationship between the students' self-concept and that of their teachers. Although there was evidence that there is a significant difference between the self-concept of students and their teachers, we must examine the results carefully. In twenty-nine cases the statistics indicated that the students' self-concept was significantly higher than their teacher's self-concept. Five cases indicated that the teacher's self-concept was significantly higher than their students' self-concept.

Dewey asserted that "Everything the teacher does, as well as the manner in which he does it, incites the child to respond in some way or another and each response tends to set the child's attitude in some way or another" (1933). If we consider the findings in this study, we must conclude that students in twenty-eight separate classrooms exceeded

the self-concept of their teachers. They in essence looked upon themselves in a more favorable way than their teachers looked at themselves. Definite conclusions cannot be formulated to explain this phenomenon but one can explain that the child has various other significant persons in their lives that foster positive self-concept. Only five teachers out of 34 actually exceeded their students' self-concepts. This leads us to begin to understand that although a teacher is a very influential person in a student's life, the teacher is not the only positive role model that the student can emulate. McCombs and Marzano (1990) support the earlier research of Matthews and Brown (1976) by stressing the role of the teacher in providing emotional support for students' self-concept of abilities. These findings lead this researcher to conclude that even though the teacher's self-concept is not high, the teacher may still provide the emotional support for students to experience success in the way they feel about themselves through extra emotional support from the teacher. Cramer, Bowerman, and Campbell (1966) found that when students were asked to name the most important influence on their educational plans, teachers ranked second only to their parents. "The child's affect, negative or positive, toward the educational process focuses on teachers as its representative" (p. 173). Brookover (1982) confirms this theory when he states "What teachers expect, students are

more likely to learn."

Self-Concept of Males and Females

Examining the relationship between the self-concept of the students and the gender of the students, it was found that there is evidence in this study that there is a significant difference between males and females. It is noted that females have a higher self-concept compared to males. An examination of the literature on the subject is valuable. Skaalvik (1990) examined 231 sixth-grade Norwegian students; the girls had a substantially higher level of achievement and higher success expectations than their male classmates in verbal tasks, whereas there were no gender differences in achievement of success expectations in mathematics or in general academic self-esteem. Studies have indicated that females mature at a faster rate than their male counterparts before adolescence, thus creating a higher level of maturity for the female student. This higher level of maturity allows the female student to succeed at a higher rate in academic-related activities. This in itself, researchers indicate, is the major factor in a more positive self-concept in girls. This study concluded that, in fact, the girls did have a more positive self-concept than did their male counterparts.

Self-Concept of Students by Ethnicity

The literature referred directly and indirectly to the relationship between the self-concept of the students and their ethnicity. Seven ethnic groups were studied and there was a significant difference between the Hispanic student and the Black student. Also, Easton, Bennett and Seymore (1987) noted that, from their studies on White, Black and Hispanic students, school type made no real differences in reading achievement gains. All three groups of students progressed at about the same rate. The distinguishing factor was the self-concept of students in relation to their academic achievement. The Hispanic students scored significantly higher in their self-concept scores than did Black students in this study. Yet the recorded drop-out rate for Hispanics in the same school district is phenomenally high. It is not yet clear why the Hispanic self-concept scores are significantly higher, even though their determination to complete high school does not seem to be the same. Hishiki (1969) noted that Mexican-American girls did not have the same high aspirations for interesting careers as did their White American counterparts.

Self-Concept of Students by Grade Level

There were three grade levels studied: grades 5, 6 and 7. There were no significant differences among those

grades. Epstein (1981) indicated that the feelings a student has about himself/herself are reflected in his/her feelings for the school. Van Koughnett & Smith (1969) spoke specifically to the adolescent when they indicated that when the school provided a positive school climate, it effected a positive self-concept in adolescents. It is important to note here that when the school is composed of positive classrooms, those positive classrooms are the actual composition of the school community. Johnson and Johnson (1979) note that how students view the school is based on what they see happening in the classroom and how they perceive the classroom teacher and other students in the classroom. When the student-student interaction is predominantly cooperative in most of the classrooms, the total school environment reflects the positive outcomes of the classroom.

CHAPTER VI

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

Professionals in various settings have acknowledged for some time that students' self-concepts have a direct affect on how successful they are in school. Thus, it is vital that students have role models who possess a positive self-concept. Few empirical investigations have explored the relationship between a students' self-concept in relationship to their teachers' self-concept. This study was designed to address those relationships. The following null hypotheses were developed:

- 1) There is no significant difference between the self-concept of students and the self-concept of their teachers.
- 2) There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and gender of students.
- 3) There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and the ethnicity of the students.
- 4) There is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and the grade level of the students.

A sample of 763 fifth-, sixth- and seventh-grade students were given the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. A sample of 34 of their teachers answered the questions in the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. The study was conducted in six schools in a large urban mid-western school district.

Teachers' self-concepts and their students' self-concepts were tested in regard to their relationship. Of the thirty-four t-tests performed, thirty-three were found to be statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. In twenty-eight t-tests the t-value is a positive number, indicating the students' mean self-concept represented by a percentage was significantly higher than their teacher's self-concept. In five t-tests the t-value was a negative value, indicating that the teacher's self-concept was significantly higher than their students' self-concept.

A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-concept of males and females. Results indicated a significant difference, $F(1,762)=13.92$, $p < .0002$, between males and females with females (mean=52.74) having a higher self-concept compared to males (mean=50.62).

A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference existed between the self-concept of students by ethnicity. Results indicated a significant difference, $F(6,757)=2.76$, $p < .012$, that Hispanic students'

self-concept (mean=52.73) differed significantly from the Black students' self-concept (mean=50.20).

A Oneway ANOVA was calculated via SPSS to test whether a significant difference exists between the self-concept of students by grade. Results indicated no significant differences existed, $F(2,764) = .42$, $p > .65$. Findings indicates that students' self-concept are similar in grades 5, 6 and 7. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' self-concept and their Illinois middle level urban students' self-concept, and students' self-concept in relation to their gender, ethnicity and grade level. This chapter presents conclusions drawn from the findings, and recommendations for further study.

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale has given a basis for establishing a comparison for this study. An excerpt from p. 13 indicates the findings:

Sex Differences. No significant sex differences in means and standard deviations of total score were found for the Piers-Harris sample (1964), the Piers sample (1965), the Millen sample (1966), or the Farls sample (1966). On an analysis of the cluster scores in fourth and sixth grade sample, Piers (1965) found sex differences on two factors with boys rating themselves significantly lower on the Behavior factor and also on the anxiety factor than did girls. Until further confirmation of the latter finding is available, it is probably better to assume that no consistent sex differences have been demonstrated on the Piers-Harris Scale. Any significant sex differences found in a single study should be reported but not given too much emphasis until further evidence has been accumulated.

Grade Differences. Means and standard deviations

have been obtained for Grades 4, 5, 8, 10 and 12 in one large-scale study with additional studies utilizing chiefly grades 4 through 6. The variability of these means illustrates a very important point concerning the interpretation of statistically significant differences. In the original publication describing the Scale (Piers & Harris, 1964) and in a subsequent study (Piers, 1965), much was made of a significantly lower mean score for sixth grade than for fourth grade subjects. Scores for subsequent samples did not confirm this pattern. Therefore, while significant differences between grades can frequently be shown to exist within any given sample, these cannot be taken seriously when significant differences of the same magnitude can also be demonstrated for two samples using similar grade levels. In other words, statistical significance may not mean practical significance, unless the differences are consistent across samples. It has not so far been demonstrated that consistent differences between grade levels can be expected on the Piers-Harris Scale. (p. 13)

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the results of analyses of the data and review of the related literature. They apply to the sample of teachers and students in Illinois public urban schools in the fifth, sixth and seventh grade levels. The conclusions are as follows:

1. Students do not depend on their teachers for a positive self-concept.
2. Female fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students have a higher self-concept than their male counterparts, due to their ability to build more intimate relationships.
3. Mexican students maintain a close familial connection that assists them in building a support system.

4. Fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students do not perceive themselves as being affected differently in the school setting.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for further study are made:

1. Further studies regarding the relationship between teacher self-concept and their middle level urban students' self-concept, and students' self-concept in relation to their gender, ethnicity and grade level. There is very little current research comparing the effects of teacher self-concept and their students' self-concept. It would be valuable for educators to examine this area in more depth. Findings could lead to more specific interventions that can be useful in higher student achievement.

2. Further studies should be conducted to focus more directly on the relationship between student achievement and (a) students' perceptions of self-concept (b) students' perceptions of their teachers (c) students' perceptions of their peers (d) students' perceptions of their ethnicity (e) students' perceptions of their gender. All above areas would give educators a clear indicator of what affects student achievement.

3. Further investigations should be undertaken to

identify the variables that are consistently associated with more positive perceptions of self-concept. Since we know that positive self-concept affects positive academic achievement, identification of these variables would allow educators to understand what areas must be addressed further in their educational offerings and programs.

4. School administrators should assess teachers' and students' self-concept on a continual basis to identify specific problems that could be remedied or improved. This continuation of monitoring and assessing would allow administrators to eliminate programs that are not working and add programs that are working.

5. Further studies should take in a greater population to examine the relationship between teachers' and students' perceptions of self-concept. This would increase the reliability of the study.

6. Further studies should include other ethnic groups to examine the relationship between ethnicity and self-concept. Although major ethnic groups were included in this study, there are many that were not. If ethnicity is a factor for positive self-concept, we must examine a wider spectrum of ethnic groups.

7. Further studies should include other grade levels to examine the relationship between age and self-concept. Although all grade levels included in this study had similar self-concepts, we must still continue to study other grade

levels. If grade level becomes a factor for positive self-concept, we must examine a wider spectrum of grade levels to understand why.

8. The same study should be duplicated on a larger scale in the same geographic area utilizing the same percentage of students from the given grade, ethnicity and gender to check for validity and reliability of the findings. This would increase the reliability of the study.

9. Certainly staff development is a crucial need in all of our schools. This not only alleviates the feeling of isolation sometimes associated with teaching, but also fosters a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging to a "dedicated team" in itself fosters a positive self-concept.

APPENDIX 1

Principal Request for Participation

address

April, 1994

Dear-----, Principal

As part of my doctoral dissertation at Loyola University I would like to have your students participate in a research project. As I indicated over the phone, I am examining four research hypotheses that specifically address student self-concept. Enclosed please find those hypotheses.

I will be administering the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale to the students in grades 5, 6 and 7 and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale for the teachers of those same students. Enclosed please find both of the scales for your inspection.

I will be contacting you by telephone within the week to make final scheduling arrangements. If you should have any questions before that time please feel free to contact me at the number indicated on my business card enclosed.

Thank you in advance for your willingness towards extending our knowledge of this very important area of research.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Maria L. Prato

APPENDIX 2

Table 5

Number of students by school and ethnicityStudents (n = 765)

School	A	B	C	D	E	F
White	67	6	0	12	14	3
Black	43	5	126	4	30	37
Asian	1	0	0	0	29	0
Mexican	29	112	0	80	40	32
Puerto Rican	1	2	0	22	8	7
Cuban	7	0	0	0	5	0
Other	9	2	0	4	26	2

The number of students participating in the study together with their ethnicity and school are displayed in Table 5.

Table 6
Number of teachers by school and ethnicity
Teachers (n = 34)

School	A	B	C	D	E	F
White	5	4	0	3	3	2
Black	1	0	6	2	1	2
Asian	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mexica	1	0	0	0	0	0
Puerto Rican	0	0	0	1	0	0
Cuban	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	1	0	0

The number of teachers participating in the study together with their ethnicity and school are displayed in Table 6.

Table 7

Number of students identified by gender

Females	406
Males	357
*two subjects did not identify their gender	

The student population participating in the study, in relation to their gender, is reported in Table 7.

Table 8

Number and percentage of students by school

A	B	C	D	E	F
151	127	130	123	152	82
20%	17%	17%	16%	20%	11%

The student population surveyed, displayed in number and percentile, in relation to their schools is displayed in Table 8.

Table 9

Number and percentage of students by ethnicity

White	Black	Asian	Hispan	P.R.	Cuban	Other
102	245	30	293	40	5	43
13%	32%	4%	38%	5%	0.7%	6%
*7 failed to identify their ethnicity 0.9%						

The students participating in the study are described by their ethnic identity and shown by number and by percentage in Table 9.

Table 10

Number and percentage of students by grade

5	6	7
235	268	262
31%	35%	34%

The number of students participating in the study in relation to their grade level is shown by number and percentage in Table 10.

Table 11
Number of teachers by gender

Males	Females
11	23

Teachers who participated in the study are reported by number in relation to their gender in Table 11.

Table 12
Number and percentage of teachers by school

A	B	C	D	E	F
6	5	7	6	6	4
18%	15%	21%	18%	18%	12%

Teachers who participated in the study are reported by number and percentage in Table 12.

Table 13

Number and percentage of teachers by ethnicity

White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Other	No Resp
16	12	1	1	1	2
47%	35%	3%	3%	3%	6%

Teachers who participated in the study are reported by ethnicity; percentages reflect the numbers in each category.

Table 14

Number and percentage of teachers by grade level

5th	6th	7th
11	13	10
32%	38%	29%

Teachers who participated in the study are reported by the grade level they teach and by number and percentage.

Table 15

Means and standard deviations for students' self-concept by
gender

<u>Gender</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
Males	406	50.62	6.95
Female	357	52.75	8.75

In addition to the demographic data provided, descriptive statistics for students' self-concept scores by gender are displayed in Table 15. The means and standard deviations of students' self-concept scores were computed for both males and females.

Table 16

Means and standard deviations for students' self-concept by
ethnicity

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
White	102	51.55	8.24
Black	245	50.20	7.47
Asian	30	49.80	5.47
Mexican	293	52.73	8.22
Puerto Rican	40	52.48	7.69
Cuban	5	52.40	6.66
Other	43	52.58	8.42

In Table 16 a display of the means and standard deviation of the students' self-concept scores by ethnicity is provided.

Table 17

Means and standard deviations for students' self-concept by
school

Schools	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
A	150	50.76	.58
B	128	54.70	.60
C	130	50.26	.69
D	123	50.34	.85
E	151	51.46	.59
F	83	52.78	.89

In Table 17 a display of the means and standard deviation of the students' self-concept scores by school is provided.

Table 18

Means and standard deviations for teachers' self-concept by
gender

Teachers	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
Males	10	325.7	26.4
Females	23	315.0	18.9

In addition to the descriptive statistics provided for the students' self-concept scores, teachers' self-concept scores are displayed as well. In Table 18 the means and standard deviations for teachers' self-concept by gender are provided.

Table 19

Means and standard deviations for teachers' self-concept by
ethnicity

Teachers	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
White	16	315.50	14.34
Black	12	316.17	21.46
Asian	1	290.00	-
Mexican	1	305.00	-
Puerto Rican	-	-	-
Cuban	0	-	-
Other	1	387.00	-
Total	31	316.90	21.57

In Table 19 the means and standard deviations for teachers' self-concept by ethnicity are provided.

Table 20

Means and standard deviations for teachers' self-concept by
school

Teachers' Schools	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
A	6	334.83	9.82
B	5	308.80	5.45
C	7	320.57	25.22
D	5	325.20	37.15
E	6	312.67	15.06
F	4	300.75	4.99
Total	33	318.24	21.61

In Table 20 the means and standard deviations for teachers' self-concept by school are provided.

Table 21

Means and standard deviations for students' self-concept by
classroom

<u>Classroom</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>mean</u>	<u>sd</u>
1	17	53.88	9.81
2	26	54.69	7.02
3	14	49.14	4.80
4	28	51.32	8.41
5	23	51.43	6.87
6	29	50.83	7.24
7	29	52.97	7.64
8	19	59.68	7.08
9	23	49.13	5.78
10	7	55.00	5.07
11	12	46.33	5.50
12	16	50.13	6.15
13	22	52.14	7.91

Table 21 - Continued

14	22	52.32	6.00
15	25	51.04	6.80
16	28	49.07	7.65
17	22	51.45	8.00
18	20	39.90	11.56
19	17	54.76	5.76
20	19	49.42	5.65
21	24	52.04	13.90
22	24	50.21	7.35
23	23	50.74	4.90
24	16	50.44	5.93
25	25	55.44	7.44
26	12	49.00	5.86
27	13	51.54	8.10
28	19	52.63	5.90
29	22	54.77	9.22
30	26	51.42	6.65
31	29	53.55	6.79
32	27	58.78	5.34

Table 21 - Continued

33	27	51.30	7.91
34	17	56.41	7.60
Total	722	51.58	7.98

In addition to the teachers' and students' self-concept scores, the descriptive statistics giving means and standard deviation for students' self-concept scores by classrooms are provided. The means and standard deviations for students' self-concept scores are provided above in table 21.

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VITA

The author, Maria Prato, was born October 15, 1956, in Cosenza, Italy. Prato attended Loyola University as an undergraduate. Married during the summer between her junior and senior year, she chose to do her student teaching near her home in Willow Springs. Immediately following her student-teaching assignment, she was hired by the local school system as a junior high teacher to fulfill the duties of a teacher who had left on maternity leave. Mrs. Prato was expecting twins in September, but accepted the position and graduated in May from Loyola.

Mrs. Prato taught a special science/math program every Wednesday at the same local school district while her children were small. When her own children were old enough to participate, she organized a Parent/Tot Workshop program through the local park district. This involved helping parents encourage their children to investigate the world around them as well as learn the most important skill of all, working effectively with others. The program historically had a waiting list. She continued this program until her third and youngest daughter was old enough to attend full-day kindergarten. Mrs. Prato then accepted a full-time teaching position as a junior high math teacher in

a Chicago Public School. Although Mrs. Prato was offered various teaching positions in the suburbs she chose to teach in Chicago to make a difference in a student's life who might not have any "significant others" to assist him or her. In the Chicago Public Schools her classes usually contained 45 or more students since the schools were sorely overcrowded. She entered students in contests where they usually won first place for their efforts.

Always rated as a superior teacher by her supervisors, Mrs. Prato worked closely with the Chicago Foundation for Education and the Oppenheimer Foundation where she was a mentor for other teachers in the Chicago Public School system. They awarded her the funds she needed for her innovative programs, enabling her to present those programs to other professionals, which in turn touched other students' lives.

In May of 1990, she was awarded Illinois Teacher of the Year. In March of 1991 Mrs. Prato was interviewed on "Good Morning America" by Joan London on the effectiveness of one of her programs. The program was designed to use the talents of older Spanish-speaking bi-lingual students to teach younger students to speak English. Mrs. Prato related to the problems of non-English speaking immigrants very well, having come to the U.S. at the age of four speaking only Italian. Her early experiences in school were in regular over-crowded Catholic school classrooms, with no

"special" programs to assist her. She was successful not only in learning to speak English proficiently within one school year, but in teaching her parents to do the same as well.

Mrs. Prato decided that although she enjoyed the classroom and the daily interaction with students, in order to be in a policy-making position she would need to leave the classroom and enter the field of school administration. Mrs. Prato is currently the principal of Clay Elementary. The school, located in the community of Hegewisch, is the furthest south and furthest east Chicago Public School . She supervises 525 students and a total personnel pool of forty.

Although there are still restraints around which the principal must work, the school reform legislation has allowed innovative principals some flexibility in the management of their local school. Mrs. Prato has taken advantage of this by hiring teachers through advertisement in the Chicago Tribune and Sun-Times and having rigorous 10-member committees choose those whom they would like to join the Clay family. Restructuring the school day by offering Reading/Writing Lab times for teacher preparation times rather than the typical Library and Gym Programs has increased student direct instructional time. Giving specific entrance-door assignment to students by grade has cut the hall traffic to a minimum which enable classes to

begin at nine sharp with the pledge and motto setting the day's positive tone. Programs such as "Student of the Month" and "Attendance Incentives" have given the climate within the school a new flavor. These efforts together with others have allowed Mrs. Prato success in cutting discipline problems to a bare minimum. Although the innovations for a more efficient, positive school community are not completed, the programs that have been implemented thus far are certainly successful in making a difference in the students' lives, which is all Mrs. Prato really wants.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Maria Luisa Conforti-Prato has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

November 23 1994

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